

INFORMATION BULLETIN

WORKFORCE INVESTMENT ACT

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TO: LOCAL WORKFORCE INVESTMENT AREAS
CHIEF ELECTED OFFICIALS
CALIFORNIA WORKFORCE INVESTMENT BOARD STAFF
WDB STAFF

SUBJECT: CALIFORNIA'S CAPACITY BUILDING STRATEGIC PLAN

Attached is a draft strategic plan for capacity building activities statewide. This plan has been developed as a key component of the State WIA comprehensive plan for employment and training. We are posting the strategic plan in an effort to provide a framework for joint planning discussion in the future. You may view the plan in its entirety on the Employment Development Department (EDD) Web site at www.edd.ca.gov and the State Board Web site at www.calwia.org/whats_new.tpl. Although the plan currently highlights the EDD's capacity building activities, with the incorporation of your comments, it will be modified to present a statewide perspective.

We are currently in the process of reviewing and modifying the plan with our internal and external partners.

We welcome your comments and suggestions about the content of the plan, and while there is no deadline for commenting, your expeditious response is greatly appreciated. Please send your comments to Michael Baldwin via e-mail at mbaldwin@edd.ca.gov.

Thank you for your participation in the development of a statewide capacity building strategic plan!

/S/ BILL BURKE
Chief

Attachment

California's Capacity Building Strategic Plan

This draft plan provides a view of California's workforce investment system strategic direction for capacity building over the next three years. The strategic plan addresses what California's workforce investment partners must do to successfully carryout its mission and achieve the vision for capacity building within the workforce investment system in California.

Background

There are several requirements in the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) regarding technical assistance and capacity building:

Title 20 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Section 665.200, requires the State to "(e) provide technical assistance to local areas that fail to meet local performance measures" and "(f) assist in the establishment and operation of One-Stop delivery systems."

Title 20 CFR Section 665.210 further specifies, "Allowable Statewide workforce investment activities include . . . (b) Providing capacity building and technical assistance to local areas, including local workforce investment boards, one-stop operators, one-stop partners, and eligible providers, which may include 1) Staff development and training; and 2) the development of exemplary program activities."

In addition, legislative intent on many of the special projects associated with the WIA is to reach out to nontraditional workforce development organizations to enhance the existing employment and training delivery system and to assist those organizations in competing for ongoing funding from other public and private sources (e.g., Faith-Based Initiative, Caregivers Training Initiative).

The task of defining customer needs is complex and includes identifying specific learning objectives for individual training competencies, planning the most effective and efficient training delivery methods, and assessing local training priorities. Assessing capacity building needs includes identifying training requirements at several different levels: supply and demand, marketing, delivery methods, volume, timing, and training content. This has been accomplished by maintaining a consistent dialogue with our Local Workforce Investment Board and One-Stop partner customers through focus groups, work group meetings and surveys.

The implementation of WIA, signed into law in 1998, has increased the partner base in California significantly. The WIA provides for 19 mandatory One-Stop partner agencies to participate in WIA capacity building efforts. This increase has caused demand for training to rapidly outpace the supply of training resources.

Capacity Building

Since the inclusion of capacity building as a component under the Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA) amendments of 1992, the term "capacity building" has been used by many to mean different things. Capacity building may address a wide range of activities including technical assistance, systems to manage information and dissemination of effective program practices in addition to training. The range and number of topics inclusive in capacity building efforts as well as the potential target audience are other variables that affect the scope of the effort.

For the purpose of this Plan, the definition of capacity building takes on a broad scope and is defined as the systematic improvement of job functions, skills, knowledge, and expertise of the personnel who staff workforce investment systems in California. In some instances, the method of providing training to our customers has evolved to a customized, modular approach where training topics have been broken down into training "bits." Learning objectives are based on staff competencies as opposed to general knowledge.

Wherever plausible, personal instruction will be replaced by more efficient, alternate strategies. In this sense, training is not about acquiring a body of knowledge or mastering the logic behind a field of endeavor. The essence of training is identifying what trainees are supposed to be able to do and figuring out an efficient and effective way to teach them to do it. Within the context of this plan, training is giving people the knowledge and skills they need to do their jobs -nothing more and nothing less.

Challenges

Lack of Resources

There is a lack of resources to provide necessary technical assistance and training. Under the JTPA statute, certain funds were set aside for capacity building purposes. Under WIA, capacity building is subsumed within the State's overall administrative responsibilities, and must compete with other required functions for scarce resources.

Currently, the State has a limited number of training staff available to address significant training needs and such staff must be included in the mix of administrative priorities. Also, because WIA is a new program, training staff is not fully trained or familiar with new requirements. There is a significant lag in developing new, effective training materials.

Increased Demand

Under WIA, the target training audience has significantly expanded, requiring a shift in business operations pertaining to training. Under JTPA, over the last few years, an annual average of over 3,000 local practitioners received training. Under WIA, the potential training audience is expected to, at minimum, triple in size. Several factors are responsible for this increase.

- The WIA, as a new workforce program, has several new program components that were not part of JTPA. Examples include components such as Individual Training Accounts and the Eligible Training Provider List.
- While several WIA program components are somewhat similar to JTPA (e.g., performance standards and measures), there are significant changes. For example, under JTPA there were six performance measures with associated incentives and sanctions. Under WIA, there are 17 separate performance measures with an entirely different, longer-term measurement system.
- Under WIA, the service delivery system is exclusively operated through the local One-Stop centers. With JTPA, approximately half of the Service Delivery Areas operated “in-house” programs. This change represents a significant increase in the number of service points for the WIA program with related staff training issues. For example, in Sacramento, the Sacramento Employment and Training Agency (the former Service Delivery Area) now operates 17 One-Stop centers under WIA.

WIA Reporting Requirements

In addition to quarterly and annual aggregate reports, WIA requires an individual electronic record for each customer served. This is the WIA Standardized Record Data (WIASRD, pronounced “wizard”). Under WIA, as under JTPA, financial data are reported both quarterly and annually. However, participant data were reported only annually under JTPA, while WIA requires quarterly participant reports. These reports will be aggregated at the national level to determine whether the State has met performance criteria, including whether California will share in the \$100 million available for incentive grants nationwide.

Failure to meet performance criteria will result in sanctions. Under JTPA, funds for incentives and technical assistance were allotted to each state, and states determined how those funds were to be distributed at the local level, based on performance. The stakes are much higher now and this priority must be recognized in developing technical assistance strategies.

Mission

The mission is to promote a capacity building system that effectively connects people, learning, and work.

Within this context, the capacity building system comprises several elements. These include a comprehensive curriculum of training topics related to workforce investment requirements and effective practices. Technical assistance is another key component of the system that may take many different forms. Also, system resources will be clearly identified in conjunction with assessing capacity building needs for different target audiences.

Vision

California will have a statewide capacity building system that is both inclusive and responsive to partner needs within workforce development communities.

To achieve this vision will require the active participation of all of the workforce investment partners in California, including most State workforce development programs, and WIA partners, including the 19 mandated One-Stop participant agencies. We will need to develop systems that allow for communication among all partner members to ensure that their training needs are met.

Values

Quality: Quality capacity building products will be developed including training, technical assistance, and information resources for California's workforce investment system.

Customer-driven: A customer-driven system of capacity building will be established that will include teamwork for obtaining input from our partners in the development and delivery of all capacity building efforts.

Timely: Timeliness in the development of capacity building products will be paramount so that our customers receive the information they need to conduct their work effectively.

Flexible: Flexibility must be incorporated into the capacity building products to ensure they are adaptable to a variety of training venues for our partner agencies, whether urban or rural, large or small.

Continuous Improvement: Continuous improvement will be incorporated into every product developed to ensure that capacity building efforts remain current in a changing workforce investment system.

Stakeholders

At the State level, the Employment Development Department Workforce Development Branch (EDD/WDB) has responsibility for administration of the WIA. The Department coordinates its activities and functions with several other departments (as well as the Health and Human Services Agency). Principal partners (and customers) include:

- California Workforce Investment Board
- California Department of Social Services
- Department of Rehabilitation
- Department of Aging
- Department of Mental Health
- Department of Alcohol and Drug Programs
- Trade and Commerce Agency
- California Department of Education, and
- Chancellor's Office of Community Colleges

In administering federal workforce preparation programs, the Department also coordinates efforts with the appropriate federal agencies. This is, for the most part, the Employment and Training Administration (national office and Region VI).

In addition, the EDD/WDB works closely with several external organizations and associations to deliver services to local areas. Notable examples include the California Association for Local Economic Development (Cal-ED) and the California Workforce Association.

The internal partners include the Employment Training Panel, Labor Market Information Division, Job Service Division, Governor's Committee for Employment of Disabled Persons, Veterans' Employment Service, and the Unemployment Insurance Division.

At the local level, partners and customers include Local Workforce Investment Areas, One-Stop partner agencies, including representatives from the agencies listed above, as well as local school districts, Regional Occupational Programs (ROP), faith-based organizations and community-based organizations.

Key Issues and Strategies

Coordination

Coordination among **all** stakeholders, and between California stakeholders and the U.S. Department of Labor's Employment Training Administration, is critical. The stakeholders in California's Workforce Investment system include the following:

- State Workforce Investment Board
- California Department of Social Services
- Department of Rehabilitation
- Department of Aging
- Department of Mental Health
- Department of Alcohol and Drug Programs
- Trade and Commerce Agency
- California Department of Education, and
- Chancellor's Office of Community Colleges

Partnership

The WIA requires the delivery of services through a one-stop system, and mandated specific partners. These partnerships are already being forged at the local level. Intrastate partnerships must be developed between participating agencies in coordination with state-local efforts.

Internal Structure

Training within state agencies has heretofore been an autonomous function, with widely varying approaches. This includes the civil service classification and educational preparation of training staff, the supervisory structure, the organizational placement of agencies' training, whether they have one training bureau for the whole agency, or separate bureaus for internal divisions, and so forth. Some organizations may have full-time dedicated training staff, while others treat training as a part-time function to be performed by staff with expertise in specific subject matter. Training for operational functions that change little over time can be standardized, while new concepts may require retooling for each training event.

Workgroup

A working group of stakeholder representatives, including customer agencies, is needed to help guide the development of a statewide capacity building system and delivery of capacity building services to customers.

Resources

Finding the resources to pay for necessary training will require stakeholders to exhibit candor, trust, and willingness to pool resources from multiple funding streams.

Goals and Objectives

Goal 1: Provide technical assistance for workforce development programs supported by federal workforce investment funds.

Goal 1 Objectives:

1. Provide technical curricula for WIA compliance topical areas.

- By the end of the current year, provide training on ten technical compliance topics for 5,000 customers.
- Program Year 2000-2001, develop and provide training for six additional compliance topics for 3,500 customers.
- Program Year 2000-2001, provide additional training for six “effective practices” topics for 2,500 customers.

2. Develop information infrastructure to support capacity building efforts.

The WDB will communicate information about workforce development capacity-building efforts to stakeholders and customers in a variety of ways.

- Publish a monthly newsletter,
- Maintain a calendar of events,
- Develop and maintain of a common Web site devoted to workforce development capacity building activities and information, and
- Jointly plan capacity building efforts,
- Develop needs assessment surveys to gather customer feedback and assess needs, and
- Establish and facilitate a workgroup of partner agency representatives to coordinate and plan capacity building efforts.

The WDB is developing a Feasibility Study Report (FSR) for the establishment of common electronic media. Capacity building will be a key component of the FSR.

Goal 2: Fully assess California's capacity building needs and resources.

Goal 2 Objectives:

1. Maintain a consistent dialogue with customers through focus groups, work group meetings and surveys.
2. Identify training requirements at several different levels: supply and demand, marketing, delivery methods, volume, timing and training content.
3. Identify specific learning objectives for individual training competencies.
4. Identify Technical Assistance and Training Resources.

In conjunction with our partners, the WDB will identify available capacity building resources throughout the State to coordinate service delivery. Partner agencies include the California Workforce Association, the Employment and Training Administration of the Department of Labor, and WIA-funded programs such as Local Workforce Investment Areas (LWIA), the California Department of Education, California Community Colleges, the California Department of Social Services, etc.

5. Work with the State Workforce Investment Board to develop a State policy regarding the use of WIA funds for capacity building purposes.

Goal 3: Develop alternate training methods to increase training opportunities within existing resources.

Since classroom training is the least favorable approach in terms of training large populations, alternate training methods will need to be explored and adapted in a manner that continues to provide quality customer service and fulfills the Department's responsibility as the administrative entity for WIA.

Goal 3 Objectives:

1. Increase the number of training opportunities by shifting training structure away from the classroom setting toward larger forum settings. Develop regional forums and alternate instructional methods in-lieu-of classroom training to provide additional training opportunities, wherever possible.
2. Explore alternate training modalities:
 - a) *CD-ROM Applications:* The Missouri Training Institute, in conjunction with ETA, has developed CD-ROM training applications under JTPA. Some training topics under WIA may be addressed through this fashion. Distribution costs are low, but updating content can be expensive.

- b) *On-Line Learning*: Models using this concept include Internet-Based training sites, and interactive training models. Such models are resource-intensive for staff preparation (dialogues are scripted and programmed). Simpler approaches may be desirable, (e.g., on-line learning guides, on-line informational resources). Updating content may be accomplished more quickly and less expensively than with CD-ROM.
- c) *Q&A/Help-Desk*: Under the JTPA Amendments, this approach was used to quickly convey technical program information to large groups with some success. Under WIA, several topics may be suitable for this approach. There is an accompanying hidden cost associated with this model to structure responses and catalogue information to construct appropriate policy guidance.
- d) *Video/Audio Replication*: This has been accomplished with some success. However, this method is also resource-intensive at the front end for scripting and editing, and updating content can be concomitantly expensive.
3. Define and develop effective training strategies to balance customer needs against available resources and technology.
- Defer “best practices” and soft skills training to focus on administrative and critical compliance requirements.
 - Break down training topics into training “bits” that allow for a customized, modularized approach.
 - Base learning objectives on staff competencies as opposed to general knowledge.
 - Wherever plausible, replace personal instruction with more efficient, alternate strategies.

Goal 4: Establish and Maintain Partnerships

Collaboration and partnership with external training partners is another key element in providing high quality training services. We will work with representatives of the Employment and Training Administration and the California Workforce Association to assure that our joint effort effectively addresses WIA program issues, appropriate guidance and concerns. Coordination will further ensure that limited resources are efficiently administered. This will include joint planning efforts and sharing the workload in providing timely, consistent training products. This approach may also involve staff resources at the local level in order to expand training opportunities.

Goal 4 Objectives:

Work with State agency stakeholders will develop a coherent capacity building plan for workforce development programs.

These stakeholders include:

- The U.S. Department of Labor's Employment and Training Administration (ETA), Region VI
- The California Department of Education (CDE)
- California Community Colleges
- The California Department of Social Services (CDSS)
- The California Department of Mental Health
- The California Department of Aging
- The California Department of Rehabilitation
- California Department of Alcohol and Drug Programs
- California Trade and Commerce Agency
- The California Workforce Association (CWA)

**If you are planning for a year, sow rice;
If you are planning for a decade, plant trees;
If you are planning for a lifetime, educate people.**
—Chinese proverb